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MEMORANDUM

To: Transportation Committee

Date: August 13, 2010

From: Bob Dean, Principal Planner

Re: Public Comment and Recommended Edits to *GO TO* 2040

The public comment period for *GO TO 2040* ended on August 6. This memo summarizes edits to the sections on Transportation Investments (including major capital projects), Public Transit, and Freight that are being recommended in response to the comments received. This memo also includes a summary of our public comment process. In addition, new versions of these plan sections, which are the three most focused on transportation, are attached.

Similar edits and comment summaries are being prepared for the other sections of the plan, but will not be complete by the Transportation Committee meeting on August 20. All recommended plan edits will be complete in time to be distributed to the MPO Policy Committee prior to their meeting on September 9, and will be provided to the Transportation Committee at the same time.

A raw and unsorted compilation of all of the comments received is currently online on the front page of www.goto2040.org. Please note that the public comment compilation is over 1,100 pages long; the comment summary that will be prepared for the MPO Policy Committee will be far shorter and much more organized.

Recommended edits to GO TO 2040 based on public comment

Three modified sections of *GO TO 2040* – Transportation Investments, Public Transit, and Freight – are attached to this memo. These sections are the primary parts of the plan that make specific transportation recommendations. Below, the major modifications made to each will be described in turn. This is not a comprehensive list of changes made, and minor clarifications, corrections, or word changes or additions are not listed below.

Throughout the below discussion, reference to page numbers is difficult because these are changing as the plan is modified. Instead, the section number and subheading is referred to; for example a reference to section 6.2 (funding) means that a change was made in the text following

the funding subheading in section 6.2. If no subheading is listed, it means that a change was made in the text immediately following a major section heading.

Transportation Finance

- The discussion of public private partnerships in section 5.4 (public private partnerships) was expanded. The text now includes a more thorough exposition of potential PPP arrangements, and the recommendation for Illinois General Assembly action on PPP's has been given added emphasis. The plan still cautions that PPP arrangements should be handled with a high degree of transparency and care.
- The plan now includes an entirely new section (5.7) entitled "Strategic Enhancements and Modernization". This section was added in response to concerns voiced by some partners that the plan was not being explicit enough in its emphasis on modernizing and enhancing the system. This section provides examples of a range of project types that could be undertaken with the enhancements and modernization budget, which makes up a portion of the \$41.8 billion slice of the fiscal constraint.
- In regards to bicycling and pedestrian improvements, further language was also added in addition to what is noted above. In section 5.1 (household and public cost savings), the potential household cost benefits of transit and bicycling/pedestrian investments were explained. Bicycling and pedestrian improvements were also noted as examples of strategic enhancements at other key points in this section of the plan, and the plan explicitly recommends taking a multimodal approach, with specific language concerning accommodations for bicycle and pedestrian travel inserted in a number of key sections.
- The unequal rules concerning use of federal funds for engineering for transit and highway projects were added in sections 5.4 and 5.5 (cost and investment efficiencies) with a recommendation to level the playing field between these modes. Also the recommendation concerning New Starts funding changes was clarified; the plan recommends that this program be broadened to support important reinvestment projects, not solely expansions. This does not mean that expansions would be ineligible, but that reinvestment projects would be eligible as well. This language was replicated in the public transit section.
- To be consistent with the public transit section, the recommendation in section 5.4 (increase gas taxes) on the 8 cent state motor fuel tax increase mentions that a portion of the proceeds should be used to fund transit.
- On the use of better evaluation criteria, this section has added clarifying language in section 5.4 (cost and investment efficiencies) that these criteria should be developed and vetted using a transparent, regional process.
- In section 5.5 (implement pricing for parking), one of the implementation actions for parking pricing now reads "encourage" (rather than require) that "subregional planning studies include a parking pricing component".
- Lastly, staff wanted to add some clarification on why "8 cents" was chosen, rather than some other number, for the recommended state gas tax increase. A state legislative proposal to increase the gas tax by 8 cents was previously endorsed by the CMAP Boardthis is why CMAP was able to include this increase in its calculation of reasonably

- expected revenues for the fiscal constraint. While *GO TO 2040* does not add clarification language to this effect, the *GO TO 2040* Financial Plan for Transportation includes this level of detail.
- Several changes to the major capital project section were made based on a recommendation by the SAFETEA-LU Committee at their meeting on July 23, 2010.
 Changes were made to the text addressing these issues. All of these changes have been made in section 5.8 except where noted:
 - o The plan should contain language stating that the fiscally unconstrained projects are also important to the region but we do not have enough money to complete them. It should emphasize that the region needs more funding for not only major capital projects but also increased maintenance and strategic improvements.
 - o Public private partnerships should be discussed at greater length in the plan as a potential funding source. (This is addressed in section 5.4 instead.)
 - The description of the BNSF line project to Oswego should note that it received special accommodations from Congress that exempts the project from the FTA New Starts process which would allow it to enter into preliminary engineering without being part of the fiscally constrained list.
 - o The plan should include a map of fiscally unconstrained projects.
 - o Overall, the level of funding for major capital projects contained in the draft plan, and the specific project list, is appropriate.
- Additional discussion was added addressing how projects were evaluated and selected for the fiscally constrained list.
- There were a number of comments asserting that transit was receiving too small a percentage of the available funds, when in fact more than half of the funds are devoted to transit. Additional language was added breaking down the allocation among highway, transit and multi-modal projects.
- Project descriptions were clarified for the Central Lake County Corridor and I-290 Multimodal Corridor projects.

Public Transit

- To address transit finance, the plan recommends new funding sources but also identifies rising operating costs as a concern that must be dealt with. Some concern had been expressed that the discussion of rising operating costs was too negative; staff maintains that this is important point to address in the plan, but wants to do so in a way that does not cast blame, but supports the RTA and service boards as they attempt to address this issue. Additional language to this effect was added in sections 6.2 (funding) and 6.4 (finance).
- The transit access indicator was adjusted to include jobs as well as households, and the definition was clarified to be within ¼ mile of fixed-route transit. These changes were made in section 6.3 (transit access).
- The recommendation for a universal farecard in section 6.4 (maintaining and modernizing) was expanded to express support for a future universal "smart card" that could be used for tolls, parking, and similar transportation-related expenses.

- More discussion of the growing number of reverse commute and intersuburban trips was added in sections 6.2 and 6.4 (maintaining and modernizing). New text further emphasizing the importance of improved transit in suburban areas to serve these types of trips, and to address the region's past and future demographic change, was also added in section 6.4 (maintaining and modernizing).
- The discussion of the I-290 multimodal corridor was inconsistent and was clarified in sections 6.4 (expansion) and 6.5 (pursue high-priority projects) to note that a range of transit options are still under evaluation in this corridor.
- References to bicycle facilities were added in several places where local actions to support transit were listed in section 6.4 (supportive land use).
- The unequal rules concerning use of federal funds for engineering for transit and highway projects were added in section 6.4 (finance) and 6.5 (improve fiscal health), with a recommendation to level the playing field between these modes. Also the recommendation concerning New Starts funding changes was clarified; the plan recommends that this program be broadened to support important reinvestment projects, not solely expansions. This does not mean that expansions would be ineligible, but that reinvestment projects would be eligible as well.
- Counties were added as lead implementers to a number of action items in section 6.5 (conduct supportive land use planning).

Freight

- A conflicting statistic on national freight movements was deleted in section 7.1 (economic)
 within the economic benefits. A more accurate statistic is stated in the National Vision
 and Federal Program for Freight recommendation.
- High speed rail was included to the list with current and future passenger rail, noting that they all need to be coordinated with rail freight in section 7.2 (rail).
- The discussion on water and air freight in section 7.2 (water and air freight) was clarified to adequately reflect the various airports and their freight capacity within the region. We have not specifically addressed airport capacity or its impact on our regional economy as part of this plan. Since this section is focused on freight, and currently airports handle less than ½ percent of freight movements within the region, staff feels this is an adequate amount of information to include in the plan. Similarly, for waterways, increased use can be explored in the future, but the priority is on improving the systems that move 97% of our freight through trucks and rail.
- The word infill was included in section 7.2 (freight and land use) to clarify the intent of promoting and planning for freight-related development in areas that are being redeveloped.
- The exploration of the Regional Freight Authority was clarified in section 7.4 (organization and public policy) to state it would include all freight modes.
- In section 7.4 (integrating freight needs), a sentence was added about land use impacts and the use of modeling and analytical tools to assist communities with addressing freight impacts.

Summary of public engagement process

On June 11, 2010 the draft *GO TO 2040* plan was released for public comment; this period was the final opportunity for residents of the region to provide feedback on the draft *GO TO 2040* plan. This memo provides an overview of CMAP's engagement effort over the summer and provides some preliminary results of the feedback received.

Between June 11 and August 6, 2010, CMAP staff engaged in a comprehensive effort to reach stakeholders for input on the draft plan. In order to reach a broad base of stakeholders, CMAP undertook a variety of approaches. On June 11, CMAP placed an ad in the Chicago Tribune to notify residents of the public comment period and to detail the dates and locations of the public open houses being held across the region. CMAP staff also sent press releases in advance of every open house to local papers and community calendars. CMAP also communicated this information through our mailing list of over 7,000 individuals. Contact information as well as details on how to participate was available in all email communications and on both CMAP websites www.GOTO2040.org and www.cmap.illinois.gov.

To further solicit feedback on the draft plan, CMAP staff met with members of the CMAP Board, the MPO Policy Committee, Councils of Government, counties, the Governor's office, various state agencies, and a number of key stakeholders involved in the plan's development. The forum of these meetings varied from individual meetings to more formal presentations to various committees or groups. In total, approximately 50 meetings of this type were held throughout the public comment period.

In addition, this summer staff engaged in a community outreach effort calling nearly 500 organizations to let them know about the draft plan and offer an opportunity to have CMAP staff to come out and give a presentation at each organization. Through this process CMAP held nearly 150 meetings with stakeholders from close to 200 organizations of all types, from municipal to civic and non-for-profit organizations, to major employers and for profit institutions.

Finally, CMAP held an open house in every Council of Mayors region, and one in the City of Chicago, for ten in total. Over 200 individuals participated in these open houses.

Although staff is in the midst of compiling all public comments received, generally speaking comments have been very supportive of the plan. Staff anticipates that there will be no major policy changes to the *GO TO 2040* plan, however there will be a number of minor changes based on the public comments as well as clarifications of the plan's recommendations.

At almost all of the open houses participants noted the broad scope of the plan and were impressed with the programs and policies discussed. Some common points from the open houses include:

- **Economic development and jobs.** The Education and Workforce Development recommendations of *GO TO 2040* received very strong support, with the hopes that efforts in this arena can strengthen and sustain the region's economy.
- Transportation access. The connection between the region's residents and jobs is crucial and should be addressed across the region. Support for better access to jobs through increased transit and reduced congestion was at the heart of many comments received.
- **Coordination.** A desire for increased coordination of government and greater transparency of data were woven throughout feedback.
- **Implementation.** Feedback from residents included many questions as to how *GO TO* 2040 will be implemented. As suggestions, many noted the importance of private sector involvement and the availability of incentives.

CMAP also received many letters concerning major capital projects. These letters tended to correlate closely to the part of the region the respondent resided and related to various projects including: Route 53, Illiana Expressway, STAR line, Prairie Parkway, I-290, CTA Red Line, CTA Blue Line, and new Metra extensions.

As a reminder, the following is the remainder of the schedule for the plan adoption:

- The final plan and a summary of comments received will be discussed by the CMAP Board and MPO Policy Committee on September 8 and 9, though no action will be requested at that time. Instead, the groups will be asked for final comments on the plan.
- The Transportation Committee will meet on September 17 and the Planning Coordinating Committee will meet on September 29 to consider recommending plan for adoption to the CMAP Board and the MPO Policy Committee.
- The CMAP Board and MPO Policy Committee will hold a joint meeting on October 13 and will be asked to consider plan adoption at this meeting.

The following provides detail on CMAP open houses, *GO TO 2040* Partnership program, "community days" outreach, and web statistics.

GO TO 2040 Open Houses

CMAP hosted ten open houses across the region to present the draft *GO TO 2040* plan. Each open house featured a short plan overview presentation by CMAP staff, followed by a question-and-answer period. Total attendance for all meetings was 228. Below are the details, including attendance information, for each open house.

DuPage County June 15, 2010 DuPage County Government Center Auditorium (421 N. County Farm Rd., Wheaton, IL 60187) Attendance: 20 West Central Cook July 20, 2010 Cicero Community Center (2250 South 49th Avenue, Cicero, IL 60804) Attendance: 8 Lake County June 22, 2010

Lake County Central Permit Facility (500 W. Winchester Road, Libertyville, IL 60048)

Attendance: 27

Will County June 23, 2010

Will County Office Building (302 N Chicago

Street, Joliet, IL 60432)

Attendance: 21

Kendall County June 29, 2010

Kendall County Health Department (811 W.

John Street, Yorkville, IL 60560)

Attendance: 16

McHenry County July 13, 2010

Woodstock Public Library (414 W. Judd St.,

Woodstock, IL 60098) Attendance: 15 Kane County July 21, 2010

Kane County Government Center (719 So. Batavia Avenue, Geneva, IL 60134)

Attendance: 43

South West and South Cook

July 27, 2010

Moraine Valley Community College (9000 W. College Parkway, Palos Hills, IL 60465)

Attendance: 22

North West/North Central Cook

July 29, 2010

Arlington Heights Public Library (500 North Dunton Avenue, Arlington Heights, IL 60004)

Attendance: 23

Chicago/Cook August 3, 2010

CMAP Office (233 S. Wacker Drive, Suite 800,

Chicago, IL 60606) Attendance: 33

GO TO 2040 Partnership Program

As part of our outreach CMAP staff also promoted the *GO TO 2040* Partnership program. To date, we have over 200 organizations, businesses and groups signed on as *GO TO 2040* Partners. A current list of existing partners can be found at http://www.goto2040.org/Partners.aspx. Our hope is to continue to increase partner numbers as we head toward the implementation phase. Individuals and organizations can still sign on to be a *GO TO 2040* Partner by completing a partnership form online www.goto2040.org/partnership.aspx. Our partners will be key to the implementation of the *GO TO 2040* recommendations. A significant proportion of current partners have committed to share information about CMAP and *GO TO 2040* to their members.

GO TO 2040 Community Days

The goal of all of our summer engagement including the "Community Days" effort was to inform groups about *GO TO 2040* gain buy-in on the plan. CMAP staff reached out to nearly 500 organizations and met with 150 plus organizations between June 11 and August 6, 2010.

GO TO 2040 Web Statistics

From the start of the public comment period (June 11, 2010) through July 29, 2010, there have been a total of 10,175 visits to the *GO TO 2040* website. Seventy percent of these visits were "new visitors" to the website. In total, there were almost 24,000 pageviews from these users. The most

popular pages were the homepage, the draft *GO TO 2040* plan page (where the full plan was made available along with individual downloadable chapters), and the page that lists open house meetings. In comparison with website traffic from last year, there have been twice as many visitors to www.*GOTO2040*.org this summer.

ACTION REQUESTED: Information and discussion.